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Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-seventh session
3-14 March 2003
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern and further action and initiatives

Statement submitted by the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers is an international non-governmental organization founded in Paris in 1928 and has had consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1961. It now affiliates national associations and individual members in 70 different countries.

The activities of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers are inspired by the principles of the United Nations Charter, as consecrated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reaffirmed in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the essential goals being the eradication of all forms of discrimination against women and the promotion of women's human rights.

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers considers that the promotion of women's human rights and consequently the elimination of all forms of violence against women and the equal participation in and access of women to all the media are inextricably linked to the recognition of the dignity of each human being.

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The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers believes that a juridical approach to each and both of the issues debated by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session should be taken within the framework of the following questions: To what extent can political and economic power restrain the effective exercise by women of their rights? To what extent is the law a diaphanous mantle that equally covers those who have the power necessary to exercise their rights and those who do not?

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers is of the view that this session of the Commission should emphasize the vital importance of consecrating in all juridical systems the legal concept of equality as a fundamental right of each human person in order to obtain an obligation to respect the dignity of each person and to restrain and eradicate all forms of discrimination against women.

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers has been working towards that goal, studying and debating the legal consequences of these matters in the different seminars and conferences that have been promoted in various countries around the world.